2006 SAS Survey Report

During the month of Feb. 2006 we ran a survey on Site Access and Science. The results are tabulated below. The number of responses is placed in front of the possible responses where appropriate.   Comments were allowed on most questions and the replies are included after the question. The final two questions were open ended comment only questions.

1. *I am:*
  4 a. An undergraduate student
25 b. A graduate student
25 c. A post-doctoral research associate
  9 d. A junior research staff member
46 e. A senior research staff member
  5 f. A tenure-track professor
38 g. A tenured professor

2. *My home institute is*
  9 a. Brookhaven National Laboratory
16 b. Another U.S. National Laboratory
80 c. A U.S. University
26 d. A non-U.S. Laboratory or Institute
22 e. A non-U.S. University

3. *I am a:*
75 a. U.S. citizen
80 b. Foreign national

4. *I inform the Users' office of my visits to BNL by using the on-line notification system:*
84 a. Always
25 b. Most of the time
15 c. Infrequently
30 d. Never

5. *Gaining access to the BNL site the first time was*

89 a. Not a problem
26 b. Moderately difficult
15 c. Difficult and time consuming
25 d. Don't remember

Specific comments

 c -   BNL ID card was taken out and was reissued at around 16:00.
However when I came back to BNL after dinner the policemen at the gate
checked my ID card and said it was not acceptable. I had to wait at the
gate for nearly two hours until the superviser of the policemen came
and allowed me to enter the gate. It happened four times upto now. So I
deceided whenever a new photo ID was issued at the users office I
droved out of BNL and be back to the gate immediately before 17:00.
When the policemen said my card was unacceptable I asked them to call
Userscenter.   -
 d -   It was back in 1991 sometime. -
 d -   First visit was in 1980's ... so not relevant to today's world.
-
 a -   Did it a long time ago. -
 a -   I first set foot at BNL in 1986; needless to say things were
pretty loose back then. -
 a -   That was in 1999. -
 c -   I came with my husband (non-US citizen) and daughter. My
husband was unable to get on. -
 b -   Adding a simple easy to find checklist to the website would
really help. -
 d -   There was no User's office back then. They have been a big help.
-
 d -   That was too many years ago! -
 a -   This is so many years ago that I don't recall.   -
 c -   time consuming since I spend a lot of time understanding what
was needed. then later on I had a hard time discovering the very
important sign that the custom put on my passport without notice and
randomly and which is needed at the entrance. some unlucky guys had to
go back to jfk but my troubles never went that far. a kind of
difficulty was to understand the best way to reach the place by public
transportations. my mystake was probably not to ask the experiment's
secretaries.   -
 c -   Each change of status (new employer new visa new passport)
requires updates to the users office. This is fairly time consuming in
particular if it has to occur during a dense(on schedule) two day visit
to BNL.I am very critical of the idea that BNL has to track the visa
status of University employees. Again this may be an area where BNL
interpretation of the rules extends beyond what is intended at the DOE.
The visa status is between the INS (I guess now HSD) and my employer.
-
 a -   It was many years ago. -
 d -   Before all this security stuff. -
 d -   The first time I came to BNL is >10 years ago when the security
concern is not as high as it is now. -
 a -   But I've been coming there for a long time. -
 d -   I having been coming to BNL for many years. The procedures are
completely now. -
 a -   It was not so difficult because my supervisor waswith me. -

a -   I was visiting BNL for the first time in 97 if I remember
correctly so it was before the tightening of access restrictions -
 a -   I entered BNL for the first time long before 9/11. At that time
there was no problem for anyone and there is still no problem for
Americans. Since 9/11 it can be extremely time consuming for non-
Americans   -
 d -   I have been coming to BNL regularly since 1984.   -
 b -   The Users Office is helpful but for foreign nationals this might
be extremely painful in case of certain discriminated countries. -
 a -   I started work on my experiment as a BNL employee. I have not
had any problems continuing site access since that time as an employee
of the two universities with which I've been affiliated. -
 d -   In my distant past... -
 a -   It was in 1988 year -
 a -   My first time was long before Sept. 11 2001 so my answers here
might not be applicable -
 a -   my badge continues to be renewed so access has not been a big
problem -
 c -   In appropriate for what I was interested in witnessing. -
   -    I've been coming to BNL since 1972. Obviously things have
changed to be more difficult but I have not had difficulties getting on
site. My collaborators from outside the US have had trouble. -
 a -   It was easy 8 years ago. -
 a -   The ease of access was largely due to help from colleagues. -
 a -   No User's Office back then! -
 d -   The first time was a long time ago and it was much easier than
it has been more recently. -

6. *How do you rate the help the Users' office provided in gaining access to BNL for you initial or subsequent visits?*

116 a. Good

 19 b. Average

  3 c. Poor

 16 d. No opinion

Specific comments

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 a -   Always pleasant and helpful.  -
 a -   I have no complaint on the help by User's office.  -
 d -   Do not use  -
 a -   The Users' Office has been very prompt helpful with requests on
all subjects.  -
 d -   BNL employee  -
 a -   But sometimes there are too many people there in line waiting to
get TLDs and only one person is working. No good! But that happens
rarely.  -
 a -   The Users' office is great and extremely helpful!  -
 a -   The people who work in the Users' Office are the BEST!  -
 a -   they help a lot and are very nice. many thanks.   -
 b -   The organization of the equivalent offices at Los Alamos and for
example at CERN is better.  -
 d -   I don't need a help and they never did.  -
 a -   The user's office team is terribly efficient  -
 c -   They do their best but sometimes are generally unable to solve
the problems  -
 b -   It would have been useful to know that I was to ensure that the
US customs officer marked my visa with 'WB' and not 'WT' (even though I
had filled in the form as entering the US on business). Since I was not
aware of the importance of this I was unable to carry out work until
the visa was corrected by US customs  -
 a -   The user's office was helpful but the guards at the gate can be
incredibly rude and mean especially if your id expires and you didn't
realize it and don't know what to do.  -
 a -   Users Office is very efficient helpful and polite.  -
   -   the users' office is not 24/7 and these days with juggling
teaching and research more difficult the limited hours of the users'
office is a disadvantage   -
 b -   The computer video's and testing are not good quality not
material to real life.  If you have to retake the test you have to
watch the entire video again-does not make sense.  -
 b -   It's a problem with the gate guards or the system they try to
follow.  -
 a -   The staff was friendly and courteous.  -
 b -   There seem to be serious confusion on whether a passport was
needed for green-card holders and those explaining the rules didn't
even seem to realize they were giving contradictory answers in
subsequent statements. -
   -   It was so long ago.  -
 a -   However once quite some difficulties when my appointment was
prolonged and visa information in the database was deleted  -
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7. *How long did it take to get the proper credentials to enter BNL the first time?*
 a. Weeks   (it seems we didn't capture the number of weeks here)
 b. Don't remember

Specific comments
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 a -    I did it in 1980's when it was easy.  -
 a -    I'm not exactly sure how long it took to be approved but it was
at least 2 months  -
 a -    Actually less than that:I called and ask what I need - and the
day I came I got my ID.  -
 b -    I don't remember for myself but I have been in the position
where I was helping undergraduate students get access to BNL and that
took about a month which is pretty limiting for summer students who are
only visiting for 10 weeks  -
 b -    It was fast.  -
 b -    Thanks for providing option "b" !)  -
 a -    quite quick   -
 b -    I have been coming to BNL for 15 years.    -
 b -    In my group the biggest problem is the time it takes to get
students to work. If the student is from a sensitive country it can
take 2 months before a lab ID and all necessary computer accounts are
issued.  -
   -    As I remember it took only 3 days of applications iris scans
safety training etc.  Not bad at all.  -
 b -    I do not recall it taking any time... When I first came to BNL
you just showed up at the gate and told them you were a visitor ---
that was it.  -
 a -    I had some difficulties to obtain my visa in time but it is not
the responsibility of BNL.  -
 b -    see above. The whole procedure was <very> different 20+ years
ago.  -
 a -    Mostly for the training though  -
 b -    Some weeks.  -
 b -    Never had problems.  First came to BNL as an employee before
September 11th 2001.  -
   -    same day access before new rules implemented  -
   -    I was a NASA Radiation Summer School student therefore the
Secretariat got the proper credentials for me.  -
 a -    Again this was long before one needed credentials (more than
telling the guard you were one the way to a dorm) to enter.  -
 a -    I got my first badge 12 years ago.  renewal has not been a big
problem  -
   -    not relevant.  see comment above  -
 b -    Don't remember exactly few weeks I guess.  -
 b -    It wasn't a long process  -
 b -    See above.  -
 a -    1 day  -
```

8. *How often did you have difficulties entering the site at the front gate even through you possess a valid ID.*

 0 a. Always

 8 b. Most of the time

 49 c. Infrequently

 98 d. Never

Specific comments

 b -   Comments already in above -

 b -   It is annoying that with my temporary visa I have to go to the user's office every time because mostly it is a new visa upon my next arrival. -

 c -   I find it strange and I think it undermines BNL security that:- sometimes badges are scanned and sometime not- different gate staff exercise different procedures- it is possible to gain access to the site trivially by walking from the highway through the forest yet people with valid IDs have complications -

 d -   Entry at other gates should also be allowed. This policy got changed when they introduced the scanners. I was actually escorted by the police from the North gate to the front gate so they could scan my ID. -

 d -   Actually once it was a minor problem: an officer looked ta my ID and said that it was not valid. I said "Why?'" He looked again and said "Sorry I misread the expiration date. "So everything was okay-dokey. -

 c -   only when I forget my badge and then I usually get a sticker at the trailer. it's pretty easy actually. -

 d -   The lady in the trailer rocks! -

 b -   Maybe "Most of the time" isn't right but much more often than it should! -

 c -   Depends on the officer on duty. Some are reasonable people. Others are not. One of them well known to all is an idiot who blindly applies security rules. He is a danger to us because he does not use commonsense. -

 c -   There is a hassle at the gate if my old registered visa is expired and I hadn't had the possibility to register the new one at BNL. -

 c -   I am an American so I never have a problem but if I arrive with non-American colleagues whose ID has expired we have to wait at the gate for the security supervisor to come which may take a long long time. -

 c -   The problem is to get a valid ID -

 d -   You can enter with a valid ID.   -

 c -   The biggest problem is that if there is a problem the guards are rude and look at you as if you must be an evil terrorist trying to get at all of the really dangerous things inside the lab. It's just demeaning. -

  -   I did not visit BNL during 3 last years. -

 d -   I always got in but I am never alone. Some one in my group always had a problem. -

 c -   A valid ID is a necessary condition to gain access but not sufficient. A valid INS visa (for foreign nationals) is also required. Gate Police can only look at the database.   -

 b -   Way too often!!!! -

 c -   Recently I was informed that I need to get a BNL parking sticker and that this was a standing policy that they were enforcing. All cars on campus are supposed to have a BNL parking sticker or a temporary

pass from the gatehouse. I have been visiting the lab for over a year
and I was never told of this policy. Additionally I think it is stupid
that every car needs a BNL parking sticker when cars can't get on
campus without going through the gates. -
 c -   Incidents: badge was confiscated when Visa-Waiver expired and
was then lost. For a two day meeting spending half running around to
get a new one was a little too much! -

9. *The officers at the front gate scan my ID*
106 a. Always
 33 b. Most of the time
  4 c. Infrequently
  7 d. Never
Specific comments
 a -   This is really annoying and a waste of time. It is bad during
the cold when I have to open up -
   -    Not clear exactly what is meant by "scan". Officers always
visually inspect my ID but never scan it with any sort of device. -
 b -   This should be consistent for all people all the time if
visitors are expected to respect the security. -
 d -   BNL employee -
 b -   This is very erratic. We frequently have a van with 3-5 people.
I think that if we didn't offer all the badges at once back seat
passengers would get scanned about 1/4 of the time. Quite often when
someone is still looking for their badge we get waved through. -
 a -   They have to because my ID is a visitor's ID not a regular
employee. -
 b -   They don't search my car if there is another passenger. I think
it is easy to get somebody in to the site. -
 b -   ... although they have to every time. One of them actually told
me once "I'll catch you tomorrow". Either get those guys to do their
jobs or send them somewhere else where they can actually be useful (I
vote for the 2nd). -
 a -   normal -
 b -   The officers almost always scan the ID. There is a very few
occasions they forgot to do so. -
 a -   since 2001 -
 a -   They scan the ID of non=US citizens. They sometimes insult me
with asking if I would like to become a U.S. citizen (referring to the
privileges the US citizens have). -
 a -   Now they do -
 a -   Always at least in the last few years. -
   -    Don't remember -

10. *The officers at the front gate are professional, courteous and helpful*

91 a. Always

58 b. Most of the time

4 c. About half the time

0 d. Rarely

Specific comments

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b -    They are not helpful  -
  -    I have no experience with that  -
b -    Sometimes it depends on the time of day or night that you enter
the lab as to whether you have hassles or not. There are often
inconsistencies in how things are handled for example sometimes a
sticker is valid ID and sometimes we have to prove ourselves with a
passport in addition depending on which officer is on duty.  -
  -    Once at the main gates you had a young female cop  - where is
she? All the time all those man faces!!! Well they are very friendly
and polite - that is good. Thanks guys!  -
b -    they're good apart from the small black guy named George (and
I'm not the only one that has had problems with him).  -
b -    I never really talk to them so I can't really judge.  -
a -    perhaps some time the checkings are a bit too long on the
arrival (when some feedback information is waited ?) ?  but I never had
some impression of abuse from police it is a professional atmosphere. I
do not even feel a priori really guilty (in France one could have
surprises).   -
b -    But "Most of the time" is not acceptable if the other times you
are harassed.  -
a -    The front gate officers are always professional and have gone
beyond their duties by helping those (me) who are unfamiliar with Long
Island.  -
b -    See above comment.  -
a -    while arriving with expired badge it happened that I had to wait
some time before getting permission to enter BNL site  -
b -    well always kind but not very helpful  -
b -    They are almost always respectful.  -
b -    But when there are problems they are really jarring.  It's
probably just a few problem guards.  Also the rules are often not
uniformly enforced.  -
b -    no major problems  -
c -    Most are professional but some go out of their way to harrass
you every time.  -
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11. *Have you had difficulties picking up keys at Security when checking in after-hours or during holiday periods?*

 0 a. Always

 1 b. Most of the time

 20 c. Infrequently

120 d. Never

Specific comments

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  -    Never tried  -
d -    Not relevant.  -
d -    Never needed to do so!  -
d -    Never had to do this.  -
d -    I am saying 'never' because I have never so far gotten to pick
up my key at Security. But I guess I have to add that the BNL's cops
are always polite and it seems that they respond promptly - so let's
hope that if in the future I have to go to Security it will be no
problem with picking keys.  -
d -    I never have done it  -
c -    Once housing had lost my reservation.  -
c -    One incident 6 years ago but haven't used onsite housing in 4
years.  -
  -    Have no experience - I always used housing office.  -
  -    N/A  -
c -    It would be nice to know where to go.  Housing hours say they
are open until midnight on Sunday but the past several times I've come
late on Sunday there is no one there.  -
d -    I have come to BNL late and my keys were waiting for me.  -
d -    The present system works well.  -
d -    Sometimes a little confusing whether one needs to go to Police
station or housing office because sometimes the housing office seems to
close early and I didn't know that ahead of time.  -
d -    Haven't picked up the keys at the Security  -
d -    I have never stayed on site.  -
  -    Never happened.  -
d -    Have not had to do this yet.  -
  -    Have never done that.  -
d -    never had to pick up keys  -
d -    I typically use the Van DeGraaff Accelerator so the building is
always open when I'm there.  -
  -    not applicable  -
  -    N/A  -
d -    Never tried  -
d -    in recent years i never had to pick up keys from security  -
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12. *How do you rate services such as badge renewal and safety training status provided by the Users' office?*

106 a. Good

30 b. Average

7 c. Poor

10 d. No opinion

Specific comments

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 a -   Not good -- Very good.  -
 c -   Too much retraining.  Why do I have to take the same exams every
year.  Frequency should be reduced to say 3 years.  -
 d -   I don't get it through the Users' office  -
 b -   This is not the Users' office fault and maybe it's improved but
several times I've had a problem because a badge would not be ready
until late in the afternoon when I wanted to leave earlier.  The safety
training system is currently a vast improvement over the past.  -
 b -   The delay with badge-renewal (badges only available after 4 pm
and on working days) is often inconvenient. It would be better if one
could directly go to the place where they are printed (or after a
moderate delay of an hour or so).  -
 b -   It is sometimes difficult to pick up a new badge if one is only
on site for 2 days because the 4pm pick up time conflicts with getting
to the airport for the last flight to the West coast. It would be
better if new cards could be ready earlier in the day.  -
 b -   It took me awhile to realize I could do badge renewal & training
all at the User's office instead of at the Center and the main AGS/RHIC
training office respectively.   -
 c -   the renewal process sucks: making me fill out the online form
months before my appointment ends is just the way for me to forget to
get the new badge when the old one expires. And giving me grief in the
process because OF COURSE I don't carry all my immigration documents
with me on a daily basis (in order to get the new badge) doesn't help
either. How about the office sending a reminder email the day before
the expiration so that we bring our passports with us to get the new
badge? How hard can that be? And to put something straight: the visa
status has nothing to do with the legality of my stay in the country -
get some immigration laws training ladies!  -
 a -   very efficient  -
 b -   much improvement has been made but I still like the situation
elsewhere better.  -
 c -   Bad hours.  Too many silly rules.  It's a pain for spouses.   -
 c -   The safety training is 95% senseless.  It is based on the
tautology that since the longer after training the more accidents occur
the solution is to retrain people more often. This is stupid.  As an
example I have had to retake the radiation training safety course
approx 50 times in my career.  -
 b -   too short badge validity period  -
 c -   This is extremely stress full for non-US citizens  -
   -   Well the user's office makes it go smoothly but most of the
training itself needs to be more meaningful or shorter.  -
 c -   They take too much time for issuing badges. It should take an
hour or two especially if you are only renewing the badge. They ask you
to come next day. By that time we have already finished our work at BNL
and returned without getting a long-term which can be used next time.
 -
 c -   I had a tough time getting trained  -
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a -   However the email which is sent reminding me to renew my appt.
sound like I will have trouble entering the site on my next visit even
though my appointment doesn't expire for many weeks. The first time I
got it I panicked. -
 a -   Most of it is a waste but at least with the on-line options it
takes less time. -
 a -   The training is very comprehensive. I like the fact that you
can take the training on-line from your home or office. -
 b -   very time consuming -
 b -   Office hours for the place that handles badge renewal are not
that convenient -
  -   Excellent -
 b -   It is a little confusing. You can get drawn in to clicking on
the training site to get your requirements and status but then it took
me a while to figure out I needed to get back to the users office web
site to actually connect to the web courses I needed. -

13. *How do you rate the ease of use of the online web site that records your training status?*
100 a. Good
 38 b. Average
 5 c. Poor
 12 d. No opinion
Specific comments
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 b -   Still somewhat ambiguous and difficult to navigate.  -
 c -   Much more confusing than it needs to be.  Why show expired
training if it has been renewed?  Why not just have two categories:
what is current and what is expired and not renewed?  -
 c -   My first visit involved the system claiming that I had not
completed training that I had. Having done the training before I was
able to do it quickly again at the users office. Then I was made to do
it again because the staff deemed that I had done it too quickly to
actually have completed it properly. They could not confirm why it
wasn't recorded and weren't prepared to pursue it. The training system
is browser specific and has java issues for various browser. This can
be fixed easily and shouldn't be a problem.  -
 c -   Sometimes I had problems it seems to depend on the web browser.
-
 a -   I must say though that at one point it was bad. The system was
not able to capture records properly - it seems now that after the
users' complains (I complained once) it was fixed.  -
 a -   it looks quicker this year than before: previously it was needed
to wait before getting it in the real security database.   -
 a -   As long as the computer systems are up and running  -
 c -   It is confusing and generally the training is not updated. I
have to call the User office anyway to know the real situation  -
 a -   I have a comment on this. My mother tongue is not
English/American therefore I had to try the "challenge exam" twice
because I could not catch the very little differences in the meaning of
the some answers. This was ascribable to language problems not to a
lack in my preparation. I would suggest an assistance for foreign
students like an on-line dictionary or a longer exam time.  -
 b -   i have occasionally had problems accessing the records and
definitely the online training from off-site.  -
 d -   I have not had to worry about my training status for some years
my effort is in the proposal phase not the running phase  -
 d -   I trained on site  -
 b -   It would help if you could get back to where you take the tests
you need easier.    -
 b -   training.bnl.gov does not provide the achievement on RHIC-
related training.  -
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14. *How do you rate the accuracy of your training status as maintained at the online web site?*

119 a. Good

 20 b. Average

 2 c. Poor

 12 d. No opinion

Specific comments

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 c -    Was not up to date so it declared I could not report to my
experiment when I was shift leader.  My training was completed several
days before the deadline.  Why is there not a grace period in
expiration of training.  -
 b -    Even after completing the course I mentioned when I checked
later it was still registered as incomplete.   -
 b -    Updates for training that was taken recently are not posted for
a while.  -
 a -    But I don't need much training anyways...  -
 b -    lot's of confusion connected with change of status (eg. employer
BNL to University).  -
 b -    It was not always clear which training is required  -
 c -    See #13  -
 a -    I never saw an error so far  -
 b -    have been some records mixups  -
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15. *How do you rate the ease of use of the web based safety training?*

101 a. Good

 35 b. Average

 11 c. Poor

 7 d. No opinion

Specific comments

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 c -    I tried to renew Rad Worker I training online (but off site) and
it was a mess.  No reason for it to be this difficult  -
 b -    It's much better than it used to be even five years ago.   -
 c -    It does not work with all the common web browsers.  -
 b -    Lots of courses and tests can only be taken from a windows
computer   -
 c -    Only works with one operating system that I don't have easy
access to and even using that operating system the browser often
crashes.  -
 a -    I'm glad that they finally updated things so that it was less
machine-specific.  -
 b -    Some sites work only with Internet Explorer meaning that I have
to reboot my PC to take a training.  -
 a -    I like that every training course is divided into several
section and that to get a credit for it you don't have to pass THRU all
of them at once but rather may finish one\two section(s) and come back
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later to the sections which follow and don't have to repeat the
sections you did before. -
 c -   You need a PC or Microsoft program which I do not use. -
 c -   PC only - bad! -
 d -   don't remember -
 a -   I should complain because the training often does not work on a
Mac. When this happens I either have to use the Windoze emulator on my
Mac or go to another room and use someone else's PC. -
 a -   I can even use netscape which was not the case last year.
sometimes I have to redo the section quickly since it is lost but no
problemo.   -
 b -   Sometimes I have problems accessing the training courses with
non-windows machines (MacOS and LinuX) -
 b -   sometimes problems with access from outside of BNL. Some courses
required Windows not installed on my computer -
 a -   The training itself is pretty good -
 a -   It is nice to be able to do it from the home institution at my
leisure rather than waste valuable time when I am at BNL to work on the
experiment. -
 b -   again I have had problems accessing some web based safety
training from offsite... I won't even begin to address the issue of it
being PC-centric (can I get a cut of that money that is coming from
bill gates too? ;o)) -
 a -   Last time I did the safety training it worked just fine. I
especially the personal "stop-work" training that my collaboration
received when we running in 2001-2002. It represents to me the highest
evolved form of bnl bureaucracy. -
 b -   It would be nice if it was mac compatible -
 c -   It only works in Windows which some of us don't use! -
 b -   too noisey from my speakers -
 c -   I have never been able to use it outside BNL -
 b -   Support for more web browsers would be nice. -
 b -   some glitches -
 c -   Works poorly except with specific versions of specific browsers
not available in all operating systems. I remember having to find work-
arounds to take the training from my computer and having to keep
restarting because it would time out while I was working on a problem -
sometimes in seconds. I recall having to go back and forth constantly
to avoid timeouts while reading a question. -
 a -   Time saving -
 a -   Once I found the right place to start from the users office site
it worked fine. It wasn't clear to me where to start from at first. -
 c -   Use of Java scripts makes it inaccessible to many
computers/browsers. I had to search around to find a system I could
use. I needed administrator privilege to get the java installed but
didn't have it. -

16. *How do you rate connections between the various onsite computer networks and systems?*

62 a. Good

71 b. OK, but could be better.

3 c. Frequent disruptions or slow response.

11 d. Security systems make it difficult to accomplish my work.

BNL systems you regularly use

Specific comments

```
 a -   I make only infrequent use of networks except locally at STAR
site. Mostly working on hardware at the experiment.  -
 d -   i try never to use BNL computers systems.  Too hard to use.  To
hard to reconfigure system. I was not able to complete an experiment
because I was unable to figure out how to tunnel my connection through
the firewall.  Was able to do it for one system but not the other.  -
 d -   Using a Linux computer I was unable to use the secure wireless
network because the default page did not come up in my browser when I
attempted to log on. I could only access the network with a Windows
machine.  -
 d -   The public wireless system is slower than our experiment's WAP-
protected wireless but ITD made us take it down. Which means cannot
print when visiting. It also means that a desktop computer (which has
broken ethernet working wireless) that I recently installed at BNL I
was unable to "register" it since I couldn't access the onsite only
registration. I would not be surprised if a walk-around they wanted to
shut that computer down even though it's only on the public network
it's on-site. Even phoning ITD there was no way for me to register the
computer without ethernet. In the past I know that the public wireless
was slowed down on purpose I do not know if it is still true but it
makes for difficult working. I couldn't get VPN to work at all after a
few iterations and have tried to work around while being both onsite on
wireless and offsite. A number of "important" things that BNL wants
people to read are often posted on internal.bnl.gov and are thus
inaccessible to people offsite or on public wireless.  -
 a -   It's a bit annoying when moving from dorms/apartment network to
office areas.  Mail smtp changes.  -
 d -   I can't send e-mails using the mail server in my home institute
from within BNL network.  -
 a -   The situation has improved dramatically in the last 3-4 years.
Before the reliability of the network within BNL was abysmal. Now there
are occasional outages and not surprisingly problems when RCF (e.g.)
undergoes a major OS upgrade. However the reliability of the BNL
internal network is now typically better than other major institutions
I know.  -
 b -   Often the network from the dorms is outrageously slow.  I
understand these should be lower priority than the networks in the
office buildings but when I come on site I come to work and having a
slow connection in the dorms means its harder for me to work after
dinner.  -
 d -   there's not enough space here nor would my verbage pass the your
filters  -
 b -   There should be an internal wireless connection (encrypted if
need be) to get a 130.199 address.   It is not possible to gain access
to electronic journals in the library unless one has a 130.199 IP
address.   If I'm on wireless (bnlexternal) then I have to go and find
a wired port which is often a nuisance.  -
```

b -   Proxy servers are a pain. We share laptops for travel and they
are wiped clean between trips. -
 a -   Only complaint is the frequent downtime of the computer
registration website especially in the weekend (sundays).   -
 d -   In the dorms or apartments I frequently had my connection
stalled specially during weekends and there was no one in ITD to help
this kind of issue. The use of a proxy inside BNL firewall makes
connections work slow and it is a pain to have to remove the proxy when
being outside (like in the apartment area or dorm) and then have to
configure the proxy when going inside the firewall. -

17. *How do you rate computer access to needed BNL systems from your home institution?*

63 a. Good

54 b. OK, but could be better.

14 c. Frequent disruptions or slow response.

13 d. Security systems make it difficult to accomplish my work.

BNL systems you regularly use

Specific comments

```
 d -    Systems prevented me from monitoring my experiment when I was at
my home institution.  Could have received important information.  -
 b -    Unscheduled RCF service interruptions seem to occur surprisingly
often; even a few per year can cause hardship.  -
 b -    AFS is down more often than necessary  -
 d -    see above  -
 c -    the physics firewall does slow things down significantly  -
 d -    My cryptocard (software) failed soon after I got home and I
don't know how to recover it remotely.  -
 d -    Security systems at BNL have had a severe impact on
collaborative work with KEK. Internet based video conferencing was
shutdown several times without warning and without *any* willingness to
help to overcome the problem.  -
 b -    There are a few web pages that I want to use but that are
inaccessible from outside presumably due to security reason. I wish
these pages become accessible from outside.  -
 d -    very slow to edit files remotely difficult or impossible to use
be tunneled in. entering via gateways is slow and sometimes unreliable.
-
 d -    After complaining for >2 years still can't access ITD calendar
to check bridge-line reservations from off-site!!!  -
   -  Never happened.  -
 d -    if my home institution was as poorly configured as the bnl
networks I would not be able to work on bnl computers while away from
bnl  -
 b -    Connections aren't always good.  It takes way too long for emacs
to open.  Individual pc's at RCF bog down too often.  -
 b -    Sometimes there is a slow connection and it takes some extra
time to do work  -
 b -    Inputing a password every time I access the BNL internal
websites seems rather excessive considering I don't work with sensitive
information!  -
 a -    I've only had occasion to do off-site training from my home
location.  -
   -  I don't use the system  -
 a -    don't use BNL system  -
 b -    When todays computers and internet connections can't keep up
with typing something is wrong. Too many crashes.  -
   -  NA  -
```

18. *Is there sufficient capability to transfer large data sets to offsite computing centers for analysis or storage?*

12 a. No. Much larger data transfer capabilities are required for my research.

33 b. Not always. Moderate upgrades would help my research needs.

22 c. Current capabilities are adequate.

81 d. No opinion

Specific comments

```
 b -   Transferring large data sets requires significant investment of
time by a few "experts" to set it up i.e. it's not a standard
operation.  -
 d -   I don't even try my data are sitting on offsite computers and I
do my analysis mostly there. There is not enough disk space to bring
them over.  -
 c -   I never had to transfer really large amounts of data.  -
 d -   I did not try yet. hope it is easy. my colleagues do not
complain apparently.  -
 c -   We transferred 270 TB of data from BNL to RIKEN for data
analysis last year.  -
 c -   really large data sets can not be stored outside anyway  -
 b -   RCF is bursting at the seams (but valiantly trying to keep up)
Runs RHIC RCF supports experiments RBRC+Theory very stimulating.  -
 b -   My real answer would be somewhere between b and c  -
  -   only because I allow bnl computers to scp into my home machines.
(which is why I have not taken the time to learn whatever bizarre
system bnl itd has imposed).  -
 a -   But this also depends on network bandwidth at remote sites over
which BNL has no control.  -
 a -   STAR takes large data sets and a big computing load is
processing the data to microDSTs.  Not enough bandwidth to ship the raw
data out to other facilites.  -
 b -   bbftp is the preferred option at RCF but doesn't seem to work
much of the time from my home institution.  -
 d -   Never use this feature.  -
 d -   Do not perform these functions  -
```

19. *What does BNL do well to help you reach your scientific goals?*

 - These last two questions need to be a little more specific ...
 - RHIC beam time
 - Have a wireless network that I can use to use my home computing network.
 - ??? Compared to Lawrence Berkeley National Lab everything seems to be much more difficult.
 - Provide a good working environment and access to very qualified personnel.
 - The staff at BNL is very well-organized. They were friendly and were actively helpful when I had questions or problems.
 - Good open atmosphere.
 - Runs superbly a world-class facility than enables superb science.
  - Computing services are good and accelerator functioning is reasonable.
 - Housing is usually sorted out very well and I have had no gate access problems.

 - I rather say what it does not do well namely: extremely bad quality of the jobs performed by carpenters! They drilled holes for me (at ATF) and installed readheads two times and every time I must go and hammer every readhead by myself because half of the readheads were loosen. Thanks God those were on the floor. Soon however I will need some on the ceiling - and if a piece of equipment falls down because of loosely installed readheads who will be responsible?! So
 - Coffee. blc (m. cuttler is a big help)
 - Provide essential computing services engineering support office and cheap onsite housing
 - Users Center: well done. RCF computing: does pretty good.
 - Everything except visa.
 - an open minded atmosphere a highly dedicated and competent behaving a financial support without car life here is misery (but I have one) and you loose a lot of time. on sundays
 - RHIC presently is the best place for my research.
 - On site housing is very helpful. Adding internet connections in dorms/apartments was great!
 - Competent friendly people and staff are a great help at BNL.
 - Deliver proton beam. Housing takes care of us visitors very well. On-site facilities are being looked after. Thank you for opening the cafeteria on weekends even tho few people use it.
- computational background support in all senses
- On site housing is a huge plus --- this makes it so easy to be a visitor! The RHIC user's center has streamlined paperwork and training.
- more convenient visa status if possible
- Access to BNL is very easy and convenient I feel welcome when I come to BNL no administrative barriers.
- For the first time visitor like a new graduate student it is good if you could do the guest approval process faster. It took 2-3 months for issuing guest ID last year.
- BNL provides us with the unique facility for experiment.
- Very good help from the user's office concerning experiment related items (training...) and life on site items (lodging support guidance and advice)
- Dedicated personnel with very high scientific qualification

Keeping computer accounts of outsiders is very important to allow them to work from outside!!!
- mostly everything works great and the scientists at BNL are great to work with.
- Improve the badge office to get the badges issued quickly.
- Web-based training very convenient.
- Until very recently- lack of federal funding for RHIC running. Also- local RHIC support groups under-funded particularly for travel.
- To make free telephone and internet connection between BNL and collaborator's University/Institute's lab spacifically for the developing countries. That will help us to chat with expert in BNL without paying more attention on telephone charges than paying full attention on the subject matter.
- to be alive
- provide state of the art facilities that are not available/possible elsewhere.
 - Run RHIC
 - the technical and support staff are awesome!
 - When the laboratory commits to a project the enormous resources are truly impressive.
 - RHIC and the staff supporting it are first rate.
 - Offers top grade technical staff and facilities.
 - no opinion
 - On-site housing
 - Doing data analysis and/or simulation I am frequently (almost permanently) using the computing facilities.
 - The tools and staff are very courteous and professional. The Van De Graaff is very reliable so getting data is very easy.
 - I do heavy ion beam effects research on semiconductors. The support people have been fantastic in helping me operate understand and gather data. As far as I am concerned don't change anything with respect to the TVG operation. The only problem I ever had stemmed from the fact that the two site computer systems (one handling guest registrations the other governing access to the TVG) didn't communicate with each-other at times. I am an employee of an aerospace company.
 - Provide the RHIC machine and scientific meetings
 - Technical and secretarial are excellent. Accelerator division provides excellent beam to RHIC
 - Allows me to work outside business hours without interference!
 - Overall scientific operation at BNL is quite good on the average.
 almost everything
 - Everything
 - Everything!
 - The BNL personnel are competent courteous and respectful. I always look forward to interacting with them.
 - The staff have been very supportive in providing lab space access and general support
 - provides freedom to work without obstruction

20. *What are the biggest impediments at BNL interfering with you reaching your scientific goals?*

 - One needs a much better catering service - both during the day and in the evening
 - Excessive ES&H regulations and training requirements
 - lack of RHIC beam time
 - Security often prevents me from doing my work. Too hard to get needed outside connections.
 - Convenient reasonable quality office space and work space can be very hard to find for visitors (we are told that it's just too expensive internally). Also safety procedures are often unnecessarily cumbersome and sometimes border on the absurd.
 - There are often disruptions of rcf and afs which cause trouble with computing.
 - I only wish that users could use the BNL facilities at any time rather than at discrete periods of time.
 - Treating our foreign collaborators badly so they do not feel welcome. Imposing occasionally frivolous security and safety rules that inconvenience people without improving either safety or security. Lab management claims a commitment to safety but   long-time employees and leaders of training frequently treat this as frivolous perhaps because policies are not well thought out
 - Site access and bureaucracy
 - Other facilities are marginal. There are virtually no cafeteria facilities for people on a non-office-hour schedule (such as night shift). This could be improved. Also it would be better if having a valid passport and visa would _always_ give access to the lab without a 30 minute wait at the gate.
 - Some inconsistencies in procedure depending on who is working on a particular day - especially at the front gate. Slowness of access approval and time to get revised access card add unneeded hassle to gaining access to the lab.
 - I suggest that you introduce a system which allows the users to judge the jobs done by the carpenters (and other supporting stuff like the electricians and plumbers) and if the job is done badly take appropriate steps up to laying off the workers that can not do job properly. Remember: today you trust a carpenter and hang a heavy piece of equipment to the support which he installed. Tomorrow because of a loosen readhead or bolt this heavy piece may fall down and injure if not kill your fellow scientist.
 - Poor onsite housing options.
 - totally unacceptable clearance policies for visitors. I should be able to escort anybody on site. New employees who have worked on site before should not have to wait for 3 month for the background check.
 - Difficulties in admitting foreign visitors on (moderately) short notice. Access/connection/usage restrictions on computing systems. Disruption of computing services (BNL)
 - Firewall: I'm not saying to open it just use it more wisely. Same with the NISUS scans and associated rules.
 - not enough disk space not enough money for travel and for bringing visitors that I need to work with.
 - Unfortunately getting visa with BNL invitation is long and unpredictable.
 - better have food by yourself or outside.
 - External boundary conditions are not optimal: 1) difficult site access (-> really hard to get foreign students to work in an efficient

way also difficult to organize workshops on short time scale. 2) on site dorm housing is too expensive for students
 - My two biggest concerns are the housing office 'losing' my reservation and being harassed by the gate guards.
 - The winters are too cold (not too sure what you can do there.).
 - Senseless security and overwhelming safety constraints.
 - This is not really the problem of BNL but the fluctuation of RHIC budget and limited beam time has been the biggest concern to us. It seems that the situation is much improved in FY07 budget proposal and I with it continues to be good in the coming years.
 - bureaucracy some rules that are only for themselves
 - Sometimes training that is needed is not readily available as some classes are only infrequently given. Web based classes are best because they are available before we arrive. More centralized offices for visitors co-located with on-site collaborators would be quite helpful in enabling more efficient scientific interaction.
 - visa extension process
 - Housing cost is prohibitive housing is of poor quality access to decent food is difficult. I don't really feel like going to BNL not because of the science but because of the accommodations. I minimize my numbers of visits.
 - Nothing.
 - I don't complain
- Not so big problem but food service (on saturday and sunday)
- availability of rooms with PC access. Security and training are punitive laws. Regulation about VISA is unsound you have to argue with the officers at the airports to get access. Too much useless training about basic concepts it should be limited to operational onsite issues.
- In my specific case I do not have complaints.
- Have better food in the cafeteria. I work better when I'm well fed and the swill in the cafeteria is overpriced and bad. I do not leave lunch in a good mood so I won't work as hard when I get back from lunch. (Last week I got a turkey sandwich and they forgot the turkey!)
- unpleasant work environment e.g. offices w/o windows; too much time is spent with so-called safety issues that don't actually improve safety
- They understand their parternet problems well and try their best to solve it.
-General lack of funding by the federal government.
- DOE's concept of cyber security and how bnl itd chooses to implement it.
- I have finally learned that when dealing with DOE and BNL there is never a last review of a project there is only the next to the last review.
- Safety has become too bureaucratic and not value added. BNL management needs to consult the Users on major plans and strategies more often. Too much of a not invented here and "father knows best" attitude. Biggest worry is that RHIC will not achieve pp luminosity and polarization goals soon enough.
- no opinion
- am a Chinese but I studied and worked at US for 8 years. It still took more than half year to get approved at BNL.
- gate guards and changing on-site rules
- None so far.
- No real impediments. I would like to see the energy levels of the Van De Graaff increased but that may not be possible with that tool.

- I did not find appropriate boxes in questions 1 and 2 above to properly communicate this status.
- Sometimes BNL management seems very corporate. I think it is important for BNL managers to be scientists and see themselves as scientists.
- Berkner lacks an automat for 24 hour food service.
- funding of my BNL colleagues
-I can NOT access my machines at my home institution (LBNL) while I am working at BNL because you do NOT allow me to run VPN as a client from BNL!!! This while you REQUIRE BNL employees to use VPN to reach into BNL from home (??)
- It takes TOO LONG to renew the appointment. Because of this I could not have my badge renewed while I was at BNL last time and next time I go to BNL it will be a pain at the gate because my badge is expired.
- Having to plan visits more than two months ahead of time is very impractical considering that even run schedules are not known with this kind of certainty.
- tight budgets cutbacks